



Health Sector Coordinating Council Cybersecurity Working Group

Health Sector Publishes Systemic Risk Mapping Toolkit

New resource by the sector for the sector guides healthcare organizations to track and manage critical third-party services that support essential workflows

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Today the Cybersecurity Working Group (CWG) of the Health Sector Coordinating Council (HSCC) is providing healthcare organizations with templates and a methodology to visualize, identify and measure systemic risk posed by third party technology, software and communications services essential to clinical, administrative and manufacturing workflows. The [Health Industry Cybersecurity Sector Mapping and Risk Toolkit \(SMART\)](#) culminates 16 months of cross-sector collaboration among 80 organizations in patient care; health insurance; labs, pharmaceutical and blood services; medical technology, public health and health IT.

“Critical functions in the health sector form a complex ecosystem of interdependent organizations of all sizes, including patient care, payment and data management systems, pharmaceutical, manufacturing, technology research, and public health administration,” said Samantha Jacques, Vice Chair of the HSCC CWG and Co-Lead of the SMART Task Group. “A cybersecurity event affecting a single supplier or third-party support for critical functions across healthcare workflows poses one-to-many impact. A disruption to one payment clearinghouse, for example, can shut down a significant portion of the nation’s healthcare delivery,” she added. Jacques is Vice President of Clinical Engineering for McLaren Health in Michigan.

The SMART Toolkit is intended for cybersecurity, supply chain, risk, operational and administrative executives across health industry organizations of all sizes and subsectors, including healthcare providers, insurance, plans and manufacturers. Its recommended practices directly address imperatives for third party risk management in the [Health Industry Cybersecurity Strategic Plan 2024-2029](#) released by the CWG last year.

Premiera BlueCross Chief Information Security Officer Dr. Adrian Mayers, a co-lead of the SMART Task Group, observed that “The impact of a cyber disruption on critical functions can include loss of patient data and payment information, theft of intellectual property, or exploitation of medical device vulnerabilities that lead to disruption of functionality or patient harm. The growth of ransomware,” he warned, “threatens the availability of critical functions and systems, leaving organizations unable to provide services or products relied upon by patients and health professionals.”

Larger organizations have dedicated resources to improve the resiliency of their critical functions, but many small-to-medium sized organizations lack similar scale and need support with tools appropriate to their size, capability and resource constraints. The SMART Toolkit provides them actionable guidance and methods for managing systemic risks related to their critical functions and dependencies within the health system. It empowers these organizations to demand secure products and high-availability of services from their suppliers, thereby driving improved standards for critical functions across the entire healthcare ecosystem. In situations where customer leverage is insufficient to influence third party security, the SMART tool can help organizations anticipate potential incidents and develop backup and resiliency plans.

About HSCC CWG: The [Health Sector Coordinating Council \(HSCC\) Cybersecurity Working Group \(CWG\)](#) is a government-recognized critical-infrastructure industry advisory council of more than 480 healthcare organizations in health delivery; life sciences, lab and medical technology; health insurance and plans; health I.T. and information exchange; and public health and government agencies partnering to identify and mitigate cyber threats to health data and research, systems, manufacturing and patient care. The CWG membership develops and publishes free healthcare [cybersecurity leading practices](#) and policy recommendations, and promotes the imperative that **cyber safety is patient safety**.

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